



Tarawa Times

2 D MARINE REGIMENT

OCTOBER 2010

Commander's Message

Dear families and friends of the Tarawa Regiment,

I hope all is going well for our families back in the States. We are now in our 8th month (almost 9) and time is starting to speed past us. When we reflect on the events since February, it seems like we started this journey a lifetime ago. There have been several changes since I last wrote and more in the works.

Last month we saw the turnover of our own Tarawa members, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, in the Musa Qala and Now Zad districts. The Marines and sailors of 1/2 performed their jobs in a manner that has been cited as "textbook" by senior members of the military. The situation they inherited back in March was a far cry from that which was turned over to their replacements last month. Under the superb leadership of LtCol Manning and SgtMaj Cullen, these men brought those two districts back to life. Now Zad could muster barely 1,000 residents in February; by June they stopped counting at 10,000. Musa Qala likewise is a good news story without parallel in northern Helmand province. Nearly 1,000 stores line the main street; schools are at capacity; electricity, phones, and other signs of normal life have crept back in; the road to the provincial capital is virtually open. These are milestones, any one of which would have been enough, that validate the sacrifice and effort of this extraordinary battalion. The transition of between 1/2 and 1/8 is complete. On the 18th of September, follow the parliamentary elections, the two battalions executed a transition of authority. It has been difficult to see the men, with whom we have shared so much over the first 8 months, depart our ranks for home. The comforting aspect of their turnover is knowing they are back home in Camp Lejeune with their loved ones. Thanks to all the Marines and sailors of 1st Battalion, 2^d Marines.

The most volatile district in Helmand province is Sangin and has been ably secured by our Marines and sailors of 3d Battalion, 7th Marines. LtCol Tipton and SgtMaj Black took on the toughest mission of attacking into the adjacent "green zones" surrounding the district center and rooting out a well entrenched enemy. Over the last three months the men of this battalion have fought their way back and forth across the Helmand valley, exacting a terrible toll on the enemy for preying on the innocent people of this strategic location.

While they fought side by side with the British Royal Marines of 40 Commando, who departed our area in September, the men of the Magnificent Third Herd can take quiet pride that without their arrival and selfless devotion to duty, the situation in Sangin would be one of sheer chaos. As this battalion prepares to make its way back to the desert of southern California later this month, they will be replaced by another West Coast battalion, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines. We have watched in awe as 3/7 established a new benchmark in toughness and resilience; 3/5 comes to Sangin with an outstanding reputation and has jumped into the fight with both feet. We look forward to all of our battalions succeeding in the coming months as they have for the last 8 months.

Our own Headquarters Company Marines and sailors are counting off their eighth month here in Delaram. While some of our men deployed in late January and can boast 9 months in combat, the Regiment as a whole will maintain February as its mark to start the long journey home. As in any deployment, all attempts will be made to return the first in theater with the first to come home. In some circumstances this is not possible as certain specialties and key leaders were knowingly sent over early to stand up our camp at Delaram but will return with the Main Body. I don't want to alarm any of our families but the mission to support our combat battalions is the reason we

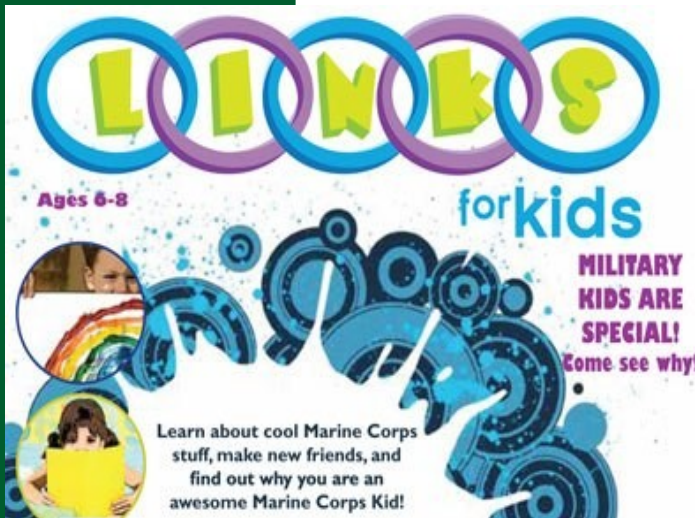
INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CO's Message cont.	2
Promotions	2
Chaplain's Corner	3-4
FRO Chat	5
Care Packages: Most Wanted	6

Promotions

Cpl. Christian Barrosveguilla
 GySgt. Michael Bauer
 GySgt. Michael Brockelman
 SSgt. Delbino Durano
 Cpl. James Manning
 SSgt. Ryan Morris
 Cpl. Christopher Richards

Cpl. Damon Rowan
 SSgt. Robert Smith
 GySgt. Ross Wafler
 Cpl. Bobby Watkins
 Sgt. Michael Thomas
 Sgt. Edward Thompson



Call 451-0176 for available dates
 and registration.



Commander's Message *continued*

exist as a headquarters; the continued focus on meeting that mission until relieved by 8th Marine Regiment is the reality of the deployment. My goal is to get your husbands and sons home as soon as possible. Their goal is to accomplish the mission assigned and ensure the success of our fellow Marines who fight everyday against an unrelenting enemy. We will promulgate more as the next two months creep past. The good news is that we are in the final quarter of this contest and have our jaws set and heads down to finish the last mile. I will

keep the families informed as frequently as information comes available. We are ably served by our Family Readiness Officer, Kimberly Hagner, and she can be reached at (910) 451-0223 if any questions or concerns arise before my next newsletter. I wish you all the best of a beautiful Fall in North Carolina and look forward to hearing from you.

Most Sincerely,

Paul Kennedy

Colonel, Commanding RCT-2

Chaplain's Corner

One day two weeks ago, I had returned to my "Alaskan" billeting tent about an hour before sunset and discovered a large pile of sand bags deposited a few feet from the tent. I remembered receiving an email from the Camp Commandant's office earlier in the week which tasked the residents of each tent with the responsibility to "winterize" their own dwellings. The intent was to reduce the likelihood of flooding in the tents when the fall rains sweep across the desert by placing several rows of sand bags next to each wall of the billeting tents. I discovered that none of the other six members who dwelt in my tent were present, so I took to the task myself by laying rows of sandbags around the tent. I had just about completed one whole side and the front of the tent with multiple layers of sandbags, which took me about 30 minutes to complete, when suddenly out of nowhere three Marines and one of the men who dwelt in my tent showed up and assisted me to complete the second half of the job. Within 10 minutes, our team effort had yielded the complete sandbagging of the second half of the tent. What had taken me 30 minutes working alone, took us 10 minutes to do working together as a team, with much less effort on the part of each participant I might add. It was at this point that John Heywood's words came back to my memory again: "Many hands make light work. So, everyone who goes contributes just a little bit and that lightens the people's hearts that much more."

We, as a Regimental Combat Team Two (RCT-2) family, are now well past the half-way point of the deployment with more time behind us than ahead. It's a critical time in any deployment when teamwork and perseverance really pay off. It's the time in a deployment when couples commence worrying about the homecoming, and lingering issues and concerns remaining from before and during the deployment. Anxiety can replace enjoyment and healthy anticipation of the family reunion. Unrealistic expectations can abound and the joy of seeing one another again can become tainted by endless worries about matters, which in another context of time and place would hardly raise an eyebrow. This is when a healthy "connectedness" with other "pilgrims" (others awaiting reunion with their own loved ones just like you and me) is most helpful. Bearing one another's burdens, assisting to re-distribute the load, sharing the moment with outstretched hands, and granting a lis-

tening ear to one in need are all reflections of a healthy family and community – simple concepts which we can and should have learned from nature. Chuck Swindoll (a former Korean War era Marine, now pastor) cited an example which I find extremely poignant in relation to the theme of teamwork. He wrote:

It's those stately geese I find especially impressive. Winging their way to a warmer climate, they often cover thousands of miles before reaching their destination. Have you ever studied why they fly as they do? It is fascinating to read what has been discovered about their flight pattern as well as their in-flight habits. Four come to mind.

Those in front rotate their leadership. When one lead goose gets tired, it changes places with one in the wing of the V-formation and another flies point.

By flying as they do, the members of the flock create an upward air current for one another. Each flap of the wings literally creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. One author states that by flying in a V-formation, the whole flock gets 71 percent greater flying range than if each goose flew on its own.

When one goose gets sick or wounded, two fall out of formation with it and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with the struggler until it's able to fly again.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (ESV)

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Chaplain's Corner *continued*

The geese in the rear of the formation are the ones who do the honking. I suppose it's their way of announcing that they're following and that all is well. For sure, the repeated honks encourage those in front to stay at it. As I think about all this, one lesson stands out above all others: it is the natural instinct of geese to work together. Whether it's rotating, flapping, helping, or simply honking, the flock is in it together...which enables them to accomplish what they set out to do. (October, 1991)

Or consider the effectiveness and efficiency of the bee community. "Bees can show you something about teamwork. On a warm day about half the bees in a hive stay inside beating their wings while the other half go out to gather pollen and nectar. Because of the beating wings, the temperature inside the hive is about 10 degrees cooler than outside. The bees rotate duties and the bees that cool the hive one day are honey gatherers the next" (*Bits & Pieces*, September 17, 1992, p. 19-20). There are many other examples of the principle of teamwork evidenced in our surroundings every day, each presenting insights reflected in the wisdom found in the opening Scripture reference I cited above.

I encourage each of you to reach out in support of others in our RCT-2 family who could use a word of encouragement or hand of support. I also challenge each of you to access the many resources available to qualified family members through the Family Readiness Officer, Marine Corps Family Team Building, Deployment Health Services, Military One-Source, and a host of others.

I know that Kimberly Hagner, our Family Readiness Officer, has been working diligently with you to keep you informed about our well-being and assisting each of you to stay connected. I pray that you will join her team of volunteers and help to support one another. Everyone can do something to lighten the load of another. I want you to know as the Regimental Chaplain, serving your warriors on the battle ground here in Afghanistan, that we are doing that very thing among ourselves here. Each of us relies on our interdependent relationship with our brothers and sisters-at-arms to ensure our safety, health, well-being and mission success. We are praying for you and hoping that you will continue to do the same on the home-front so that we may together remain "Always Faithful" (Semper Fidelis) in "taking care of our own."

"Together, Everyone Achieves More" (T.E.A.M.)

Sincerely,
Chaplain Bill Appleton ("CHAPS")



We're on the web!

www.marines.mil
Search: Units
North Carolina
Infantry
2nd Marine Regiment

Save it to your favorites. :)

FRO Chat

Greetings Tarawa Family,

Homecoming is getting so close! This month we began making morale calls again to all of the authorized contacts in our mass communication system to ensure that all contact information, phone numbers and email addresses, are up-to-date. Many of you have moved away during the deployment and offered temporary addresses; please be sure to update your address with us upon your return. If you wish to have someone added on behalf of your Marine or sailor, please understand that only your service member can update that information, there are official channels which allow him to do so.

In the months ahead we will begin sending information in preparation for homecoming. Meanwhile, many of you have begun asking questions about the reunion process and what to expect. You are encouraged to check out Military One Source (www.militaryonesource.com) for helpful information on preparing for your loved one's return. Remember, they are just as anxious and full of anticipation about returning home as you are. Thoughts and confusion about change, communication, and getting re-established into a world they have been removed from for the past year are all common. Be sure to talk about those concerns openly and honestly with your loved one in order to manage expectations. Your loved one might want to simply stay at home and enjoy his favorite meal, a clean environment, lounging on the sofa, a real bathroom, and some privacy... the creature comforts of HOME that have been stripped from him during deployment. Be patient in your desires for making vacation plans that are overly involved or full of restrictions on time and remember they have been living by the clock for a year straight. Also keep in mind that Chaplain Appleton will be working with our Marines and sailors to offer guidance on their similar concerns.

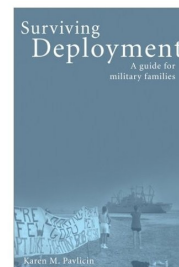
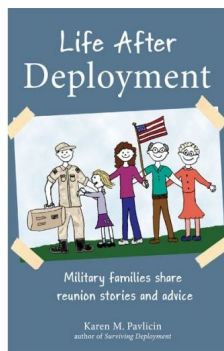
MCFTB will assist us in presenting return and reunion workshops, one for children and one for spouses, that will cover everything you will need to know about the reunion. We will be hosting a ladies only evening to cover the unique aspects of communicating with your spouse through the remainder of deployment and thereafter. Stand by for details...

Our banner making party will be held in December. Parents and extended families that are in the local area are welcome to attend. We ask that all participants respond "yes" or "no" to any event so that we may properly plan.

Switching gears... Mail delivery has been a concern for some of our families. Please understand that the unit is doing the best that they can to deliver mail to our Marines and sailors in a timely manner, while minding the demands of their environment. Members of our unit are scattered throughout Afghanistan which presents obstacles from time-to-time in mail delivery. We recognize the importance of your letters and care packages and the effect they have on the morale of our men. Bare in mind that while the government postal service strives towards excellence, they cannot offer the same guarantees as the U.S. Postal Service. This includes guarantees of priority and express delivery. If you have any questions or concerns about the matter you are welcome to contact me.

Thank you for your continued sacrifice on behalf of the Marines and sailors of RCT-2. I know it's not always easy but we hope you find comfort in knowing your family readiness program is here to support you. Until next time be safe, be well, and Keep Moving.

Kind regards,
Kimberly Hagner
Family Readiness Officer



Life After Deployment, the companion book to Surviving Deployment is available for FREE at www.militaryonesource.com.

Recipe for a Military

Wife

1 1/2 cups patience

2 tablespoons elbow

grease

1 pound courage

1 cup tolerance

Dash of adventure



Find us on Facebook!
Regimental Combat Team 2

Thanks to our Public Affairs staff for doing such a great job of keeping our RCT-2 fans informed.

Family Readiness Officer

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Cell: 910-382-0643
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Deputy Family Readiness Officer
GySgt. Adam Cortese
910-451-0152

2d Marine Regiment OOD:
910-451-0141

Important Contact Information

2d Marines: Family Readiness

PSC BOX 20101

Camp Lejeune NC 28542-0101

***The address above is temporarily established while the unit is deployed.**

Unit Hotline/Command Updates:

1-800-230-8762 ext. 14

Chaplain Support: 910-451-4841

American Red Cross: 1-877-272-7337

Current Care Package List: Most Wanted

Shaving Cream
Razors
Toothpaste
Tooth brushes
Shampoo
Body wash
Chap stick
Power bars
Microwaveable foods
Beef jerky
Peanut butter/ cheese crackers
Foot powder
Lotion
Hand sanitizer
Deodorant
Letter writing gear
Dental floss
Holiday decorations
Candy canes
Wash clothes
Marine approved socks, under-shirt



General care packages to support our unit can be sent to:

Religious Ministry Team
RCT-2
Unit 73910
FPO AE 09510-3910

Mailing Address

Rank, Name
RCT-2 (*Section)
Unit 73910
FPO AE 09510-3910

*Sections selections are:

HQ
S-1
S-2
S-3
S-4
S-6
RAS
RMT